

REMARKS

The Office Action mailed September 25, 2006 has been carefully reviewed and the foregoing amendment has been made in consequence thereof.

Claims 1-23 are now pending in this application. Claims 1-10 stand rejected. Claims 11-23 have been withdrawn from consideration.

Claims 2, 3, 5, 9 and 10 have been amended to correct minor informalities. Claim 7 has been amended to further clarify the features of the claim. No new matter has been added.

The rejection of Claims 1, 2, 4-7, 9 and 10 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.K. Patent Reference GB 2 052 251 to Büttner et al. (hereinafter referred to as “Büttner”) is respectfully traversed.

Büttner describes controlling the operation of a washing machine based on a measured surface tension, water hardness, pH value and/or electrical conductivity of water introduced into the washing machine. For example, Büttner describes terminating a rinsing operation in a washing machine when a conductivity value of the rinsing water reaches a conductivity value of the water introduced into the washing machine such that further rinsing cycles are not needed. Notably, Büttner does not describe or suggest a controller configured to control an amount of fluid in a tub during a rinse cycle based on a conductivity measured at an end of a wash cycle.

Claim 1 recites a washing machine including “a tub; a sensor positioned and configured to sense a conductivity of a fluid in said tub; and a controller operatively coupled to said sensor and configured to control an amount of the fluid in said tub during a rinse cycle based on the conductivity of the fluid measured at an end of a wash cycle.”

Büttner does not describe or suggest a washing machine as recited in Claim 1. More specifically, Büttner does not describe nor suggest a controller configured to control an amount of the fluid in the tub during a rinse cycle based on the conductivity of the fluid measured at an end of a wash cycle, as required by Applicant’s claimed invention. Rather, in

contrast to the present invention, Büttner merely describes that when the conductivity of the rinsing water reaches the conductivity of the water introduced into the washing machine further rinsing cycles are not required. Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Claim 1 is submitted to be patentable over Büttner.

Claims 2, 4-7, 9 and 10 depend, directly or indirectly, from independent Claim 1. When the recitations of Claims 2, 4-7, 9 and 10 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 1, Applicant submits that dependent Claims 2, 4-7, 9 and 10 likewise are patentable over Büttner.

For at least the reasons set forth above, Applicant respectfully requests that the Section 102 rejection of Claims 1, 2, 4-7, 9 and 10 be withdrawn.

The rejection of Claims 3 and 8 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Büttner is respectfully traversed.

Büttner is described above.

Claim 1 recites a washing machine including “a tub; a sensor positioned and configured to sense a conductivity of a fluid in said tub; and a controller operatively coupled to said sensor and configured to control an amount of the fluid in said tub during a rinse cycle based on the conductivity of the fluid measured at an end of a wash cycle.”

As set forth above, Büttner does not describe or suggest a washing machine as recited in Claim 1. More specifically, Büttner does not describe nor suggest a controller configured to control an amount of the fluid in the tub during a rinse cycle based on the conductivity of the fluid measured at an end of a wash cycle, as required by Applicant’s claimed invention. Rather, in contrast to the present invention, Büttner merely describes that when the conductivity of the rinsing water reaches the conductivity of the water introduced into the washing machine further rinsing cycles are not required. Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Claim 1 is submitted to be patentable over Büttner.

Claims 3 and 8 depend, directly or indirectly, from independent Claim 1. When the recitations of Claims 3 and 8 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 1, Applicant submits that dependent Claims 3 and 8 likewise are patentable over Büttner.

For at least the reasons set forth above, Applicant respectfully requests that the Section 103 rejection of Claims 3 and 8 be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, all the claims now active in this application are believed to be in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and favorable action is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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